

Andrew Jackson, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

JACKSON'S MEMORANDUM ON BIDDLE'S LETTER.¹

¹ The reference is to Biddle's letter to Secretary Ingham, Sept. 15, 1829, growing out of the controversy over the conduct of Jeremiah Mason, president of the branch bank at Portsmouth, N. H. It was a foolishly severe letter, and Ingham sent an extract to Jackson. See R. C. H. Catterall, *Second Bank of the United States*, p. 179; also Bassett's *Jackson*, II. 594–597. The whole correspondence was brought to light in John Quincy Adams's individual report as a member of the committee of 1832 to investigate the condition of the bank. This report is in *Reports of Committees*, 22 Cong., 1 sess., IV. 437 ff.

[November?] 1829.

Biddles letter.

Repeats their good feelings to the new administration and their great aid afforded to it in the payment of the late sum of Public Debt.? Why this so often mentioned—answer for political effect—and newspaper slang etc.?

The act of Congress their guide—true, but if that charter is violated, is there no power in the government to inquire and correct if true. The duties exclusively, the directors without controle of the Executive or any of his officers etc. etc. etc. (Trusting to the variety of the directors)

The Bank is strong enough to sustain itself and officers.

See answer. The reply as to the purity of the Branch directors *well said*. The suggestion of purity of all judicial bodies Banks included. Extract from P. of the Bank. I deem it my

Library of Congress

duty to state to you in a manner perfectly respectful to your official and personal character, yet so clear as to leave no possibility of misconception that the board of directors of the Bank of the U. States and the boards of directors of the Branches of the Bank of the U. States, acknowledge not the slightest responsibility of any description whatsoever to the secretary of the Treasury touching the political opinions and conduct of their officers—that being a subject on which they never consult and never desire to know the views of any administration.

Note —The Secretary must note, and reply to that part of the P. which relates to Mr Hills note and the N. H. memorial, and to relieve the executive from any interference with the Bank, but remark, he reserves his constitutional powers to be exercised through Congress, to redress all grievances complained of by the people of the interference by the Branches with the local elections of the states, and all their interference with party politicks, in every section of our country, where those complaints have reached the Executive.